

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 00799 040834Z

14

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NSAE-00 VOE-00 /043 W

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P 040530Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3566

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS JIDDA 0799

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, CVIS, SA, US

SUBJECT: SAUDI ARABIA -- NEW BUSINESS VISA PROCEDURES AUTHORIZED

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS INSTRUCTED ITS EMBASSIES TO GRANT ENTRY VISAS TO FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN AND COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES ON REQUEST WITHOUT REFERRAL TO THE MINISTRY. CHANGE IN PROCEDURE AUTHORIZED TO FACILITATE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES. ACCORDING TO CONSULAR SECTION OF FONMIN, DURATION OF NEW BUSINESS VISA IS FROM FIFTEEN TO THIRTY DAYS.

2. COMMENT: PREVIOUSLY, SAUDI ARABIAN EMBASSIES WERE EMPOWERED TO ISSUE THREE-DAY VISAS WITHOUT REFERRAL TO FONMIN AND EXTENDABLE TO TEN DAYS UPON APPLICATION AFTER REPEAT AFTER ARRIVAL IN KINGDOM. WORKLOAD HAS BECOME INTOLERABLE FOR SAUDI OFFICIALS AS VOLUME OF BUSINESS VISITORS MOUNTS STEADILY. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT BETWEEN 70 AND 100 BUSINESS VISITORS HOLDING THREE-DAY VISAS ARE ARRIVING DAILY AT JIDDA, AND REQUESTING EXTENSIONS.

3. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT DURING THE ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE SEASON, WHICH DURING 1976 WILL TAKE PLACE FROM APPROXIMATELY NOVEMBER FIRST THROUGH THE END OF DECEMBER, VISA ISSUANCE TO OTHER THAN PILGRIMS IS SUSPENDED. USDOC
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MAY WISH TO PUBLICIZE THE NEW PROCEDURES IN COMMERCE TODAY.

PORTER

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